

# Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

## March 4 2008 TORNADOES SITUATION REPORT # 11

31 March 2008, 1400 Hours

*New information is in BOLD ITALICS.*

### SUMMARY

In the early evening hours of March 4 a cold front moving across the Commonwealth generated storm activity. These storms produced rain, wind and reported tornadoes. National Weather Service Morristown confirmed that an EF1 Tornado did touch down in Big Stone Gap, Wise County Virginia. Preliminary damage reports have been received from several jurisdictions and state agencies. No injuries or deaths were reported.

### EXECUTIVE ACTION

**EOC Activation:** The Virginia VEOC is at Recovery Operations with limited staffing.

**State of Emergency:** Governor Kaine declared a State of Emergency at 1119 hours 5 March 2008.

**Federal Declaration:** No declaration has been requested at this time.

**Protective Actions:** Local Emergency Declared by:  
Wise County at 1800 hours 4 March 2008  
Town of Big Stone Gap at 1700 hours 4 March 2008  
Essex County at 0800 hours 5 March 2008

### WEATHER

**Forecast:** **Monday 31 March:** Mostly cloudy with rain showers likely. Highs in the mid to upper 50s. South winds 5 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 60 percent. **Monday night:** Mostly cloudy. A 40 percent chance of showers after midnight. Lows in the upper 40s to lower 50s. South winds 5 to 15 mph. **Tuesday 1 April:** Mostly cloudy. A chance of showers and thunderstorms in the evening, then a slight chance of showers after midnight. Lows in the lower 40s. North winds 5 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 50 percent. **Tuesday night:** Mostly cloudy. A chance of showers and thunderstorms in the evening...then a slight chance of showers after midnight. Lows in the lower 40s. North winds 5 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 50 percent.

### OPERATIONS SECTION

**ESF 5 – Emergency Management:** Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)  
Event created in WebEOC “2008-03 Tornadoes 03-04-08”. VDEM and localities posting event related information and resource requests in WebEOC. VDEM is monitoring recovery operations.

**Local Liaison:** VDEM Region 4 Coordinator ***continues to monitor recovery activities and remains available to assist if needed.*** .

### INFRASTRUCTURE BRANCH

**ESF 1 – Transportation:** Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
VDOT provided signage, 2 front end loaders, 2 dump trucks, transportation, chainsaws and safety equipment to support Department of Correction personnel in debris removal in Big Stone Gap. VDOT signs were demobilized on 10 March and additional VDOT resources and crews demobilized on 17 March.

### LOGISTICS SECTION

**ESF 7 – Resource Support:** Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)  
3 requests for assistance were cancelled. A total of 9 requests have been completed. All State resources demobilized at the COB 17 March.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)  
Provided 2 – 10 inmate work crews to assist in debris removal in the Town of Big Stone Gap. VDOC resources demobilized on 17 March.

**ESF 17 – Volunteers and Donations:** Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VA-VOAD)  
VA-VOAD representatives were on scene 14 March evaluating resource needs for the Town of Big Stone Gap. VA Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Officials met with Big Stone Gap Officials 17 March to initiate an action plan to assist in continued recovery efforts. Students from a local college may assist in the debris removal. ***VA-VOAD resources were in Wise County and Town of Big Stone Gap 24-25 March and canvassed impacted areas to determine unmet needs. Collected data was provided to Wise County Emergency Management and Gap Corporation, local aid group, to distribute funds already collected.***

### PLANNING SECTION

**Situation Unit:** Preparing weekly Situation Reports, monitoring WebEOC entries and maintaining situational awareness. ***Next Situation Report will be issued Monday, 7 April 2008 at 1400 hours.***

**ESF 14 – Recovery:** ***VDEM Public Assistance staff is in the process of assessing damage estimates received from Wise County and Big Stone Gap on 31 March to determine eligibility of damages and the need for field inspections.***

***VDEM Individual Assistance staff determined that there was not enough eligible damage to qualify for Small Business Administration and/or FEMA Stafford Act declarations.***

### LOCAL ACTIVITIES

**Wise County:** Reported 6 houses destroyed, 15 with major damage, and 25 with moderate or lesser damage. Wise County declared a local emergency and their EOC is open on a limited schedule, 8am until 5pm, with limited staffing and has been in contact with VDEM Recovery and Mitigation personnel. Local Social Services contacted to begin setting up meetings to assist residents in need. Initial damage assessment received from Wise County on 13 March. The Town of Big Stone Gap Incident Command Post relocated to the local police station on 14 March. Wise County reported over 100 truck loads of debris has been removed from the impacted area and relocated to a local quarry. ***Disposal of debris is a main concern and Wise County is investigating options to address this concern.*** The Town of Big Stone Gap submitted a Notice of Interest in Applying for Commonwealth Emergency Relief 19 March 2008 estimating total eligible costs of \$2.5 - \$3 million. ***A fund raiser was held on 28 March that raised \$27,000 that the Gap Corporation will distribute to impacted residents in need.***

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